

Satellite Downlink-BLM National OHV Strategy

Almost a year ago, the BLM announced that Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) activities have gained recognition as an increasingly important issue in the eyes of the public. The environmental community considers motorized access and OHV recreational activities to be a significant source of environmental impact to wildlands; while the motorized and “multiple use” communities are alarmed by the concept of increasing management, and of land closures that have resulted.

Last summer, the BLM went to the public with a request for help with the entire issue from the public. Included in the request for public involvement were a website and public meetings soliciting public involvement in the development of a National OHV Strategy. The public sent in almost 5000 comments, and 49 “Listening Meetings” were held at Bureau Resource Advisory Committee meetings at BLM offices throughout the west. BLM staff analyzed all the comments, and issued a public release draft of strategy on 12/5/2000. The public comment period will run until January 3, 2001. The final strategy will be released soon thereafter.

On 12/14/2000, Henri Bisson, BLM’s Assistant Director for Renewal Resources and Planning, will lead a panel discussion with Washington Office and Field staff to discuss the strategy and answer questions in a satellite broadcast from the BLM’s National Training Center in Phoenix Arizona. The broadcast, starting at 10 AM Mountain Standard Time, will start with a presentation for approximately ½ hour, and also include an additional 1 ½ Question and Answer period, allowing audience members to phone or FAX questions to the panel, and will conclude approximately 12:00 Phoenix time. The primary audience will include members of BLM’s RACs, but BLM field employees are certainly invited to participate. If general public is interested, they are more than welcome to attend, but comment preference will be given to RAC members.

For additional information, please contact Jim Keeler at (202) 452-7771 or Rodger Schmitt at (202) 452-7738.